

**CORNUTI:**  
**A TEUTONIC CONTINGENT IN THE SERVICE**  
**OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT**  
**AND ITS DECISIVE ROLE IN THE BATTLE**  
**AT THE MILVIAN BRIDGE**

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With a Discussion of  
**BRONZE STATUETTES OF CONSTANTINE**  
**THE GREAT**

by  
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# I

THE Art Museum of Princeton University has recently acquired a bronze statuette of an early Byzantine Emperor (figs. 1, 2) which, because of its unusual historical importance, deserves a fuller discussion than is usually devoted to objects of such small artistic merit.<sup>1</sup> It is a seated figure, only 0.125 m. high, crudely cast in bronze. A survey, by Mr. Marvin Ross, of all the known specimens of this class of object will be found directly following this paper; thus we need not here go into technical details. It will suffice to note that the Princeton statuette appeared for the first time in the famous Gréau collection.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently it was mentioned by Frieda Schottmüller,<sup>3</sup> who identified it correctly, as we shall see, as the Emperor Constantine I, whereas F. O. Waagé,<sup>4</sup> the next scholar to discuss it, left its attribution to a specific ruler open. This is all that has been written on this object save for the recent paper by E. Schaffran<sup>5</sup> (see postscript, p. 179).

The form of the monogram of Christ on the shield (fig. 2) cannot be earlier than the period of Theodosius I, and the globe surmounted by a cross (which is now broken off, though its base is still visible) gives the same *terminus post quem*. The exaggerated round eyes remind us of the Carmagnola head and other related imperial portraits; so the actual date of the object must be sought in the fifth or even in the sixth century. The crudeness of the cast and the deformation of the figure by incompetent copying prevent us from using the criteria of stylistic analysis.

But there are other features which point to a much earlier date for the prototype of our statuette. The bejewelled diadem and the rectangular precious stone in its center go back to Constantine who is the earliest possible candidate for this portrait. The Jupiter-like costume with the naked torso and the mantle (draped over the left shoulder and covering the legs down to the ankles) is, on the other hand, hardly conceivable for any Christian emperor after Constantine. Even in his case, I know of only one such representation in the guise of the supreme god, a parallel which is particularly striking because it is found on an official portrait, circulated after the victory over Licinius, when the profession of the Christian creed stood in the foreground of court propaganda. This is a bronze medallion struck in Rome, the best specimen of which, in the Museo Archeologico of

<sup>1</sup> For the photographs of this object and the permission to publish it, my best thanks are due to Professor Ernest De Wald and Miss Frances Jones of Princeton. The Constantine medallion in Florence is reproduced by the courtesy of Professor G. Caputo; it was selected from a large series of photographs taken in 1957 and 1958 in Italian museums, with the help of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia. The section on primitive secret societies is part of my research sponsored by the Wenner-Gren Foundation of New York. Other acknowledgements will be found in the notes below, but I wish to record here my indebtedness to Marvin C. Ross for his valuable collaboration.

<sup>2</sup> Collection J. Gréau, *Catologue des bronzes antiques et des objets d'art du moyen-âge et de la renaissance* (Paris, Hôtel Drouot, June 1-9, 1885), p. 64, no. 319.

<sup>3</sup> Frieda Schottmüller, "Bronzestatuetten und Geräte," *Bibliothek der Kunst- und Antiquitäten-sammler*, 12 (1918), p. 39, fig. 23.

<sup>4</sup> F. O. Waagé, *AJA*, 39 (1935), p. 81 and fig. 2.

<sup>5</sup> E. Schaffran in *Rivista di Archeologia cristiana*, 32 (1956; published in 1958), pp. 243-249. This paper was brought to my attention by Professor E. Kitzinger.

Florence, is reproduced in figure 3. Here, as I remarked elsewhere,<sup>6</sup> Constantine as the Supreme God, the *deus praesens* of the heathen, receives sovereignty over the Orient from his eldest son who, following the example of Alexander the Great, had conquered this region like a new Dionysos. The panther, sacred animal of Dionysos, makes its *proskynesis* before the new Jupiter. Thus our statuette must be an image of Constantine. If any doubt should remain on this point, our discussion of the emblem on the shield will dispel it.

The loop attached to the top of the head proves that the statuette was used as a weight. The idea of using a ruler's effigy for this purpose may appear undignified to us. We know, however, that in Rome, from the age of Pompey and Caesar, the image of the head of state often replaced the divine guardians of justice to act as guarantor of the exactitude of weights.<sup>7</sup> The object under discussion represents a novel development of this practice. It is not the reigning emperor who is featured on this weight as the supreme guardian of justice, but the dead founder of the Christian Empire, the embodiment of the righteous ruler, an ideal emerging from a glorified past.

## II

The shield on which Constantine's left hand rests shows two incised emblems: a chrismon of the cruciform type and below it a crescent-shaped device with an oblique hatching suggesting the texture of a fleece, and terminating in two confronted goats' heads. Almost a quarter of a century ago, I discovered<sup>8</sup> the same shield-badge (figs. 5, 6) on a relief of one of the pedestals of the Arch of Constantine in Rome,<sup>9</sup> and I explained it as the emblem of a unit of the Late Roman army called the *cornuti*, the "horned ones," *i.e.* the he-goats. The alternative suggestion, proposed by F. Altheim,<sup>10</sup> may be discarded. It needs no discussion here, because our explanation has proved to be correct<sup>11</sup> and has been confirmed by the new publication and elaborate study of the Arch of Constantine by H. P. L'Orange, who has demonstrated the role of the *cornuti* in the famous battle near the *pons Milvius* on September 28, 312.

<sup>6</sup> A. Alföldi, *JRS*, 37 (1947), p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. A. Alföldi, "L'evoluzione spirituale del principato," in *Corvina* 3, series 1 (1952), p. 32 seq.

<sup>8</sup> A. Alföldi, "Ein spätrömisches Schildzeichen keltischer oder germanischer Herkunft," *Germania*, 19 (1935), pp. 324-328.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 45. Cf. H. P. L'Orange and A. v. Gerkan, *Der spätantike Bildschmuck des Konstantinsbogens*, Studien zur spätantiken Kunstgeschichte, 10, (Berlin, 1939), pls. 28 and 32 (hereafter quoted as L'Orange). Cf. the reproductions of the drawings of the *Notitia dignitatum* with similar shield emblems on pl. 46 of my paper quoted in note 8.

<sup>10</sup> F. Altheim in his "Runen als Schildzeichen," *Klio*, 31 (1938), p. 55 seq., and in his *Literatur und Gesellschaft im ausgehenden Altertum*, 1 (1948), p. 231 seq. derives such emblems from the runes. He attaches no importance to the goat-heads on the shields of the *cornuti* on the Arch of Constantine, although the drawings of the *Notitia* clearly show similar shield-emblems. Now the Princeton statuette gives us definite proof that my explanation of the carvings on the Arch had been correct. The wolf-heads of the shield-emblem on Valentinian's silver patera at Geneva (R. Delbrueck, *Spätantike Kaiserporträts*, [Berlin, 1933], pl. 79 and p. 179 seq.) show that other military units had paired animal heads on similar crescent-shaped devices. The horned helmets discussed by L'Orange, and again by me in this paper, have not been noticed by Altheim; they explain the peculiar shape of these emblems which R. Egger ("Der Grabstein von Čekančevo," *Schriften der Balkankommission, Antiquarische Abteilung*, vol. 11, 2 [Vienna, 1950], p. 16) interprets as the crescent of the moon.

<sup>11</sup> H. P. L'Orange, pp. 43 and 124.

L'Orange contends that the officer with the shield of the *cornuti* also has horns on his helmet. I think, rather, that the two curved objects emerging from the crown of the helmet are feathers. But much more important than this detail is that L'Orange has been able to show the presence of warriors with horned helmets beside soldiers in regular uniform in the battle scenes of the Arch<sup>12</sup> (fig. 4). In the attack on Verona these *cornuti* appear as spearmen with the battling Emperor himself. Their commander wears the garb of a Roman officer.<sup>13</sup> Far ahead of the main body of the attacking soldiers another high ranking officer with a horned helmet is advancing toward the enemy.<sup>14</sup> A member of the *cornuti* is also conspicuous in the battle scene by the river, in this instance fighting with his sword.<sup>15</sup> In the relief that shows Constantine accompanied by the goddesses Roma and Victoria, with the god of the River Tiber gazing at them, a *cornutus* immediately follows the divine escort of the ruler.<sup>16</sup> The accomplishments of this regiment could not have been more highly exalted. In the representation of the victorious entry of Constantine into the City, the "horned ones" are also present.<sup>17</sup> They are marching with the "regulars" and the Moorish spear-throwers.<sup>18</sup>

The glorification of the *cornuti* is, indeed, even greater than L'Orange had thought. Here I must register some slight disagreement with his views because I can no longer follow his suggestion,<sup>19</sup> based on my previous paper, that the horned helmet was not the exclusive emblem of one regiment. In late imperial times Roman helmets did not have horns. And although we know from the *Notitia dignitatum* that several variant forms of the shield-emblem of the *cornuti* were used by other military units, there is only one such emblem on the Arch of Constantine, namely that of the *cornuti*. Furthermore, no other unit of the victor's army was singled out in this fashion by the sculptors of the Arch. L'Orange's contention<sup>20</sup> that the presence of two Rhine legions, the *I Minervia* and the *XXX Ulpia*, was also indicated by the animal badges on the helmets and shields of their soldiers cannot be sustained. The symbol of Neptune, known to have been the emblem of the *legio XI Claudia* and of the *XXX Ulpia*, decorates the hexagonal shields of a *tropaion*; so these belong to the vanquished and not to the victorious army. Moreover, the trident with two dolphins was so popular an ornament that it may have been used here without a precise connotation. L'Orange's observation<sup>21</sup> that the officer's helmet on pedestal-relief no. 6 has a ram's head, the badge of the *I Minervia*, deserves more serious consideration, but I do not find it convincing. If the ram's head had been meant to record the achievements of this legion and had not been merely an

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68 seq.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66 seq.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76 seq.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43 and 110.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.



ornamental motif, the heroic deeds of the *I Minervia* would have been represented in the battle-scene reliefs as were those of the *cornuti*. We may, therefore, conclude that the heroes of the great battle were the Moorish cavalry and the *cornuti* alone. The dramatic turning point in the reign of Constantine was inseparably connected with them. The Emperor and the Senate gratefully acknowledged this on the Arch, and the early Byzantine statuette with the *cornuti* shield asserts it unmistakably once more.

Ammianus attests that the Teutonic war cry, the *barditus*,<sup>22</sup> was introduced into the Roman army of the fourth century by the valorous *cornuti*.<sup>23</sup> I think we can go a step further. The adoption by the Roman army of the barbarian shield-emblem of the *cornuti* seems to stem from Constantine's gratitude towards these all-important auxiliaries: he not only allowed them to use the *barditus* as a battle cry, and, as we shall see, to keep their barbarian shield-design, helmet, and standard, but he used these same emblems for the other Teutonic formations incorporated into the cadre of his new army and recruited chiefly from areas beyond the frontiers of the Empire.

### III

We can gather more details about the *cornuti* in the century following Constantine.<sup>24</sup> They were originally an infantry unit, as the Arch of Constantine clearly demonstrates.<sup>25</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus also knows them as such<sup>26</sup> and in the *Notitia dignitatum* they appear as *auxilia palatina*, i.e. among the élite of the infantry regiments. Like so many other Constantinian formations in the West, they were split into the *cornuti seniores* (occ. V [14] 158 = VII 9) and the *cornuti iuniores* (occ. V [24] 169 = VII 18), while in the East they appear undivided, together with the *bracchiati*, another contingent of barbarian origin which was coupled with them as an operational unit, perhaps already under the first Christian emperor (*or.* VI [9] 50). This multiplication of the *cornuti* units and their distribution between East and West reflect the organizational measures of Valentinian and Theodosius I, a subject that does not concern us here.<sup>27</sup> The *cornuti* were further expanded by the introduction of a mounted detachment of the same name which has the rank of *vexillationes palatinae* in the *Notitia*. As in the case of the infantry *cornuti*, there was a division into *seniores* and *iuniores* in the West, while in the East they remained undivided, and were again combined with the *bracchiati*.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, 3.

<sup>23</sup> Ammianus, XVI, 12, 43. Mommsen, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 6, 240.

<sup>24</sup> For the relevant facts see R. Grosse, *Römische Militärgeschichte von Gallienus bis zum Beginn der byzantinischen Themenverfassung* (Berlin, 1920), p. 38 seq.

<sup>25</sup> L'Orange, p. 42.

<sup>26</sup> Ammianus, XXXI, 8, 9. R. Grosse, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>27</sup> The detailed history of these regiments will soon be published in a comprehensive survey of the late Roman and early Byzantine army by my pupil Dietrich Hoffmann of Basel.

<sup>28</sup> *Equites cornuti seniores*, occ. VI [6], 48 = VII 162 (or 168); *numerus cornutorum seniorum*, *CIL*, VI, 32963. 28; *Equites cornuti*, *Not. or.* VI [9], 50; *Equites bracchiati seniores*, occ. VI [4], 45 = VII, 161; *Equites bracchiati iuniores*, occ. VI [46] = VII 170; *Equites bracchiati*, *or.* IV, 29. Cf. *CIL*, V, 8740. 8760.

As R. Grosse<sup>29</sup> has pointed out, this new type of infantry, unknown before 312, included in the fourth century a certain percentage of provincial Roman elements along with the ever-growing numbers of Germans from beyond the *limites*: *mixti cum arctois Germanis Galli*, as Ammianus<sup>30</sup> describes them. In the reign of Julian, Valentinianus, the future Emperor, a native of Pannonia, was commander of a battalion of the *cornuti*.<sup>31</sup> But even before that the commander of the *cornuti* had been a Teutonic officer of renown, Bainobaudes.<sup>32</sup> In spite of such fluctuations, our remarks concerning the shield-emblems, name,<sup>33</sup> and battle cry of the *cornuti* clearly indicate that these were free Teutonic warriors, at least when they first appeared in the battle of the Milvian Bridge. Their constant partners in warfare,<sup>34</sup> the *bracchiati*, who shared their Teutonic *barditus*, had the same origin. Their name derived from the barbarian armrings which they wore<sup>35</sup>—certainly with their national costume and weapons rather than with the Roman military uniform. We are, therefore, entitled to seek analogies for the organization of the “horned warriors” among the social and military institutions of the free Teutons. The curious shield emblem of the *cornuti*, which also appears in finds made in German territory not subject to the Romans, may give us the key to this complex problem.

## IV

Excavations in Teutonic territories have brought to light half a dozen representations of warriors wearing on their helmets the same device with confronted animal heads as the *cornuti*. These are bronze ornamental reliefs of about A.D. 600 which seem to have been disseminated from Scandinavian workshops to what is now Germany.<sup>36</sup> It is sufficient for our present purpose to recall the two most characteristic examples: the bronze core for repoussé work from Torslunda, Sweden<sup>37</sup> (fig. 11) and the fragment of a decorative pattern on the royal helmet of Sutton Hoo (fig. 7).<sup>38</sup> The occurrence of animal

<sup>29</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>30</sup> Ammianus, XXV, 6, 13.

<sup>31</sup> *Chron. Pasch.* (549, Dindorf): Οὐλαεντινιανὸς τριβούνος τότε ὦν τάγματος Κορνούτων οὕτω λεγομένων νουμέρω Cf. Theophan. a. 5855 (51, de Boor).

<sup>32</sup> Ammianus, XVI, 12, 63.

<sup>33</sup> Ammianus, XX, 4, 13, says that the *petulantes* were Gauls. This probably refers to their country of origin, but does not imply that they were Roman citizens.

<sup>34</sup> Ammianus, XVI, 12, 43.

<sup>35</sup> Lydus, *De mag.* 1, 46: βραχιᾶτοι ἦτοι ἀρμιλλίγεροι ψελιοφόροι.

<sup>36</sup> J. Werner, *Acta Archaeol.*, 21 (1950), p. 79. These have recently been discussed by R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, “The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial: Recent Theories,” *Proc. Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and Natural History*, 25 (1949), p. 50 seq. and pl. 10. Cf. Bruce-Mitford, in R. H. Hodgkin, *A History of the Anglo-Saxons*, 3rd ed., 2 (Oxford, 1952), p. 720 and pl. 86. K. Hauck, “Herrschaftszeichen eines Wodanistischen Königums,” *Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung*, 14 (1954), p. 9 seq. (hereafter quoted as Hauck).

<sup>37</sup> Often reproduced, e.g. in O. Almgren, *Hällristningar och kultbruk* (*Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademiens Handlingar*, 25 [Stockholm, 1927]), figs. 7 and 45a. O. Montelius, *Kulturgegeschichte Schwedens* (Leipzig, 1906), figs. 167 and 217. *Statens Historiska Museum: Tiotusen år i Sverige* (Stockholm, 1945), fig. 185.

<sup>38</sup> H. Maryon, in *Antiquity*, 21 (1947), p. 139. Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.*, pl. 90. Hauck, p. 40, fig. 6. Our figure 7 incorporates the results of the latest restoration work done at the British Museum, kindly communicated to me by Mr. R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford.

heads on helmet horns can be traced back to the La Tène culture of the Celts. The pair of horns on the Celtic "Torrs Chamfrein" in Edinburgh (fig. 9) with duck-like heads on their extremities may be associated with this group. The "chamfrein" has recently been analyzed by R. J. C. Atkinson and Stuart Piggott,<sup>39</sup> who conclude that the horns were made during the earliest phase of the Celtic occupation of Britain and did not originally belong to the bronze head-piece to which they were attached in modern times. In the opinion of these scholars the horns were either mounted on a helmet or were the terminals of two long drinking horns. The reconstruction of the second alternative, which the authors consider more likely than the first (pl. 85 of their study), is not, however, very convincing. Such a curved finial would have been awkward for the drinker and, to my mind, inconsistent with Celtic style.<sup>40</sup> The supposition that this pair of horns belonged to a helmet is more plausible. Such helmets are known from the La Tène culture; but instead of adducing the well-known horned helmets from Gaul, it will be sufficient to point to the famous silver cauldron from Gundestrup in Copenhagen. In the cavalcade represented on this object the first horseman has a bird on his helmet, the next a boar, the third stag horns, and the last goat horns (fig. 10). The helmets surmounted by boars on another Torslunda plaque (fig. 12) may be of the same Celtic origin, and recall the variety of zoomorphic helmets worn by the Gundestrup riders. These Celtic parallels may show the provenance of the crescent-shaped horns of the *cornuti*. In the late Scandinavian Bronze Age (fig. 8)<sup>41</sup> we already find horned helmets provided with eyes and nose, evidently an imitation in metal of animal masks worn by warriors in prehistoric times.<sup>42</sup>

I should like to add a few words about the possible meaning of these primeval practices. K. Hauck<sup>43</sup> thinks that the Torslunda plaque (fig. 11) represents Wodan's fight with the Fenris wolf. This ingenious guess is not, however, convincing. One eye of the *cornutus* is admittedly missing, but this does not necessarily make him Wodan the one-eyed; and since on the Sutton Hoo helmet (fig. 7) there are two such figures, they cannot both stand for Wodan. It is important to note that the Sutton Hoo *cornuti* are not a mechanical reduplication, but form an integrated couple. Nevertheless, Hauck is surely right in postulating a mythical prototype for these scenes, the exact definition of which must be left to competent scholars. Such a mythical prototype need not have referred to a prominent divinity, it could simply have represented the legendary ancestor of a tribe. This may be confirmed by the fact, stressed by Hauck, that the *cornutus* of the helmet of Old Uppsala was a member of the Swedish royal house, and that the tombs of Valsgärde on which the *cornuti* once more occur, belonged to some important clan of the nobility.<sup>44</sup> Since the

<sup>39</sup> *Archaeologia*, 96 (1955), pp. 197-235.

<sup>40</sup> For the normal shapes of drinking horns, cf. *Archaeologia*, 96 (1955), pls. 64-69.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. R. Djupedal—H. C. Broholm, *Aarb. f. Nord. Oldk. och Hist.* (1952), p. 5 seq. R. Halbert, *Arsberättelse Lund* (1954/55), p. 221, fig. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. e.g. K. Meuli, *Schweizer Masken* (Zürich, 1948), p. 104. W. Krause, *Gött. gel. Nachr.* (1948), p. 101 seq.

<sup>43</sup> Hauck, pp. 40 seq. and 46 seq.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

pair of *cornuti* on the Sutton Hoo helmet are derived from the same Swedish iconographical repertoire, it is possible that this helmet was not a looted object, but the property of a prominent member of the ruling clan of East Anglia, which was of Scandinavian origin. The mythical prototype of the *cornuti* in the service of Constantine the Great must be sought in the same milieu that produced the Scandinavian representations of *cornuti*.

It has, I believe, been overlooked that the horns on the helmets of the *cornuti* on the Arch of Constantine (fig. 4) are different from the usual type of prehistoric helmet, on which the horns are placed over the temples. In this case the horns, instead of being laterally disposed, grow from the center of the rim above the forehead of the warrior. This is because they are goats' horns. Thus the *cornuti* of the Roman army had goat helmets. Their shield emblems are a secondary feature, perhaps only the Roman adaptation of a symbol that had originated as a standard or as a headgear. Since in the social and religious life of primitive nations both the standard and the headgear denoted the sacred origins of a tribe or a clan, it is not surprising that the *cornuti* should have identified themselves by such meaningful symbols.<sup>45</sup>

A curious feature of the Scandinavian *cornuti* is that they are shown dancing. This is not a display of the sword dance, the chief amusement of Teutonic tribes.<sup>46</sup> On the Torslunda plaque the warrior with the wolf's mask (fig. 11), who draws his sword for a fatal duel with the *cornutus*, is not dancing like his opponent, and this contrast suggests that the latter is performing the *tripudium*, the wild dance that preceded battle and produced the desired emotional frenzy, *mixta petulantiae rabies*.<sup>47</sup> This wild explosion of brutal instincts was noted by the Romans among all the barbarians of the West; the Alpine tribes,<sup>48</sup> the Spaniards,<sup>49</sup> and the Thracians<sup>50</sup> practiced it, as well as the Celts and the Teutons.<sup>51</sup> Sometimes the *tripudium* was not a chaotic outbreak, but a well-disciplined collective performance, like the war dance of the Ambrones before the battle of Aquae Sextiae.<sup>52</sup>

The comical appearance of such a dance was, of course, completely lacking in the early stages of cultural evolution. The cult-dance of the he-goats was a highly serious act among the early Greeks.<sup>53</sup> Horned or animal-shaped

<sup>45</sup> Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>46</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, 24, Cf. K. Meschke, *Schwerttanz und Schwerttanzspiel im germanischen Kulturkreis* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1931), p. 162. Hauck, p. 42 seq.

<sup>47</sup> Saxo Gram. V I, ii. G. Dumézil, *Mythes et dieux des Germains* (Paris, 1939), p. 87 seq.

<sup>48</sup> Liv. XXI, 42, 3.

<sup>49</sup> Liv. XXIII, 26, 9.

<sup>50</sup> Tac. *Annales*, IV, 27, 4.

<sup>51</sup> Tac. *Hist.*, 5, 17.

<sup>52</sup> Plut. *Mar.* 19, 4 (vol. 3, 258 Ziegl.): οὐκ ἀτάκτοις οὐδὲ μανιώδεσι φερόμενοι δρόμοις, οὐδ' ἀναρθρον ἀλαλαγμὸν ἰέντες, ἀλλὰ κρούοντες ῥυθμῷ τὰ ὄπλα καὶ συναλλόμενοι, πάντες ἅμα τὴν αὐτῶν ἐφθέγγοντο πολ- λάκις προσηγορίαν, "Ἀμβρώνες, κτλ.

<sup>53</sup> I have in mind the famous passage of Herodotus, 5, 67: τὰ τε δὴ ἄλλα οἱ Σικυώνιοι ἐτίμων τὸν Ἀδρηστον καὶ δὴ πρὸς τὰ πάθεα αὐτοῦ τραγικοῖσι χοροῖσι ἐγέραιρον, τὸν μὲν Διόνυσον οὐ τιμῶντες, τὸν δὲ Ἀδρηστον. Cf. K. Ziegler, *RE*, 6 A, cols. 1899 seq., esp. col. 1917. Fr. Brommer, *Satyroi* (Würzburg, 1937), pp. 6 seq., 10 seq., 13. On Dionysos as a goat, see M. V. de Visser, *Die nicht menschengestaltigen Götter der Griechen* (Leiden, 1903), pp. 47, 208 seq. M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, I (Munich, 1941), p. 218. *Idem*, *Opuscula selecta*, I (1951), p. 61 seq. K. Th. Preuss, in *Vorträge Bibl. Warburg* (1927/28), p. 1 seq. E. Maass, *Gött. gel. Anz.* (1889), p. 803 seq. (phyle of the αἰγικορεῖς).

helmets suggest that even the Greeks once used in battle the symbols of their zoomorphic ancestors.

Similarly if the *aias* ("goats") of the Rig-veda were better known, they would reveal themselves, I think, as warriors with goatmasks. However, these few remarks must suffice to show that the Teutonic *cornuti* did not stand alone in the prehistory of the Indo-Europeans.

A dancing human figure with goat horns on his head (discovered on a pre-historic rock carving at Tanum, north of Göteborg) was identified by H. Güntert as the god Thor.<sup>54</sup> The ritual dance of the Longobards around the head of a goat that was sacrificed to their divinity<sup>55</sup> may also be significant in this connection. O. Höfler has stated that the "he-goat" names in the Sagas refer to warrior groups, an explanation which he hopes to substantiate in a future publication.<sup>56</sup> Survivals of such warrior groups have been discovered by anthropologists in the traditional revenant gatherings of masked village youths around New Years' Day. These youths are called "Haberer" (from the "Haber-gais")<sup>57</sup> and have a counterpart in a youth organization in Zurich named "he-goats" and in other similar groups.<sup>58</sup>

This is the background from which Constantine's *cornuti* emerged, a warrior group of the kind we find even today among the savages of many regions. The addition to the Roman army of such a contingent, untouched by Roman civilization but, after the victory over Maxentius, exalted above all the legions, gives a vivid illustration of Constantine's revolution. The glorification of the *cornuti* on Constantine's Arch and on his statues—the Princeton weight is a crude derivative of one of the latter—illustrates the sudden elevation of these barbarian mercenaries in the hierarchy of the Roman army. The *bracchiati* and other similar contingents soon followed.

The Princeton statuette is important not only because it confirms the role played by the *cornuti* in the battle of the Milvian Bridge; it is also an additional *testimonium* of Constantine's conversion. In a famous passage of *De mortibus persecutorum*, Lactantius states that the Emperor, admonished by the divinity

The goat-skins of female divinities who were originally leaders of warrior-groups, such as the *aigis* of Athena or the goat-skin of Juno Sospita, are also pertinent to this problem. Cf. K. Kerényi, in *Eranos-Jahrbuch*, 17 (1949), p. 65.

<sup>54</sup> H. Güntert, *Der arische Welthönig und Heiland* (Halle, 1923), p. 45 seq.

<sup>55</sup> This has been discussed by Müllenhof and many scholars subsequently; cf. e.g., R. Wolfram, *Schwerttanz und Männerbund* (Kassel, 1938), 186 seq.

<sup>56</sup> O. Höfler, *Kultische Geheimbünde der Germanen*, 1 (Frankfurt, 1934), note 41.

<sup>57</sup> R. Wolfram, *op. cit.*, p. 233 seq.

<sup>58</sup> E. Hoffmann-Krayer, "Knabenschaften und Volksjustiz in der Schweiz," *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde*, 8 (1905), p. 177. Cf. also P. Thielscher, in *Forschungen und Fortschritte*, 28 (1954), p. 374 seq. In a letter dated August 20, 1949, Prof. O. Höfler gave me the following additional details: "Professor Burgstaller, Linz, schreibt mir, daß das Haberfeldtreiben im Innviertel 'Bockshäuteln' heißt. Das ist gewiß wichtig, denn der Name des Haberfeldtreibens—jener oberbayrischen Form des von kultmaskentragenden 'Haberern' ausgeübten dämonischen Rügegerichtes (das ich im 2. Band meiner *Kultischen Geheimbünde* als eine Funktion typischer Kultmannschaften hoffe erweisen zu können)—birgt in dem Glied 'Haber' wohl sicher das mit *caper*, alt-nord. *hafr*, identische Wort für 'Bock'. Ferner verweist Professor Burgstaller auf L. Siess, *Sagen aus dem oberen Mühlviertel*, 4 (1898), p. 9ff., wo eine Felsenhöhle, genannt 'Bockstube', erwähnt wird, in der sich nach der Sage menschliche 'Böcke' aus der Ortschaft Neundling bei Altenfelden aufgehalten haben sollen. Habergeissmasken gibt es bei vielen hiesigen Burschenschaften." He also mentions Swedish youth groups with the name "he-goats," descendants of our *cornuti*.

in a dream, ordered the initials of Christ to be painted on the shields of his soldiers. Our bronze figure shows this very monogram on the shield of the *cornuti*, thus providing unmistakable confirmation of Lactantius' story. It is very likely that this feature of the shield derives from the monumental prototype of our figure. The *cornuti* won the battle not by their valor alone, but also because of the protection of the wonder-working sign, the symbol of their Emperor's heavenly patron.

PRINCETON, APRIL 1958.

*Postscript.* This note had been written when I received the latest issue of the *Rivista di archeologia cristiana*<sup>59</sup> containing a paper by E. Schaffran on the same statuette, which he had seen in a private collection in Vienna.

Schaffran has not followed the lead of Robert Zahn, who had attributed a similar statuette from Pergamon to Constantine I.<sup>60</sup> He has failed to realize that the crudeness of this object is due to its being a derivative work, separated from what must have been a famous prototype by a long series of increasingly debased molds, and he attributes it to one of the Longobard rulers between A.D. 583 and 626. This obliges him to consider the Jupiter costume of the Emperor as a *toga*, possibly with a tight-fitting *tunica* over the chest. The stylistic degeneration is interpreted as Germanic "rhythm" (p. 247 seq.). Schaffran rightly recognizes the Teutonic character of the shield emblem and considers it an apotropaic symbol coupled with the monogram of Christ (p. 248), but he does not perceive its relationship to the same emblems in the *Notitia* and on the Arch of Constantine. Consequently, though we must be grateful for the publication, I have nothing to add to my own interpretation.

ANDREW ALFÖLDI

## BRONZE STATUETTES OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

A GROUP of early Byzantine bronze weights in the shape of a seated emperor began to be published as early as 1885. These little statuettes have been identified as Constantine the Great by Zahn<sup>1</sup> and Schottmüller,<sup>2</sup> and as Valentinian by Chittenden and Seltman,<sup>3</sup> while Protasov<sup>4</sup> left the identification open. It has remained for Professor Alföldi to establish beyond question that these bronze weights derived from an original representing Constantine the Great.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *supra*, note 5.

<sup>60</sup> R. Zahn, "Zwei neue Schnellwagen im Antiquarium," *Amtliche Berichte (Berliner Museum)*, XXXV (1913), pp. 1-10.

<sup>1</sup> R. Zahn, in *Amtliche Berichte aus den königlichen Museen*, 35 (1913), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> F. Schottmüller, *Bronze Statuetten und Geräte*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1921), p. 46, fig. 26.

<sup>3</sup> J. Chittenden and Charles Seltman, *Greek Art* (London, 1946), no. 380, pl. 105.

<sup>4</sup> N. D. Protasov, "Sirijskie reministsentsii v pamiatnikakh khudozhestvennoj promyshlennosti Khersonesa," *Institut arkheologii i iskusstvovnanija, Trudy seksii arkheologii*, II (1928), pp. 100-117.

Five of these little bronze statuettes are known in the museums of Europe and America. The first one to be published was the specimen now at Princeton which was illustrated in 1885 in the Gréau sale catalogue of bronzes,<sup>5</sup> and ascribed to the sixth century without any attempt to identify the subject. Later it passed into the Kieslinger Collection in Vienna, and is said to have been brought to this country by a Viennese refugee.

The best known of these statuettes is in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin (fig. 13) and is of particular interest in that it is complete with steelyard and weighing pan, so that one can easily see how such weights were used.<sup>6</sup> This weight, said to have been found at Pergamon, was first published by R. Zahn and figured in the Exhibition of Late Antique Art from the Mediterranean Area held in Berlin in 1939.<sup>7</sup>

In 1928 two more examples, excavated in Russia, were published by N. D. Protasov, who pointed out their similarity to the sculpture of the Arch of Constantine, but made no attempt to identify the subject. One of these<sup>8</sup> (fig. 14) was found in the village of Perlevka of the Voronezhskaia province and is now in the State Historical Museum in Moscow. The other (fig. 15),<sup>9</sup> which is of better quality, was discovered at Kherson and is now in the local museum. The fifth of these weights, formerly in the collection of Professor A. B. Cook of Cambridge, England, and shown in the Exhibition of Greek Art held in London in 1946, is now in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection (fig. 16).

Although all of these bronzes obviously represent the same emperor and derive from the same original, they may be divided into two groups. In the first group, consisting of the specimens in Berlin, Washington, and Kherson, the emperor holds a globe without a cross, while in the second group represented by the statuettes in Moscow (fig. 14) and Princeton (figs. 1, 2) the emperor holds a globe surmounted (or once surmounted) by a cross. The shields, in so far as can be told from their present condition, have various decorations or none at all. This variation indicates that the bronze casters did not understand the significance of the shield-emblem of the Princeton statuette, which in this respect is surely closest to the lost original, as demonstrated by Professor Alföldi.

Curiously enough, India has given us irrefutable proof that small bronze statuettes of the early Byzantine period derived, at least in certain instances, from actual statues. Professor Benjamin Rowland has published a photograph of a bronze statuette of a seated St. Peter, holding a key and blessing with his right hand, that had been found at Charsada in the Northwest Frontier Province of India (fig. 17)."<sup>10</sup> This object which, according to Rowland, must

<sup>5</sup> Collection J. Gréau. *Catalogue des bronzes antiques et des objets d'art du moyen âge et de la renaissance* (Paris, Hôtel Drouot, June 1-9, 1885), pp. 64 and 65, no. 319.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of the use of such a scale see D. K. Hill, "When Romans went Shopping," *Archaeology*, V (March 1955), pp. 51-55.

<sup>7</sup> H. Schlunk, *Kunst der Spätantike im Mittelmeerraum* (Berlin, 1939), p. 50, pl. 42.

<sup>8</sup> Protasov, *op. cit.*, pl. VIII, figs. 3 and 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. VIII, figs. 1 and 2.

<sup>10</sup> B. Rowland, Jr., "St. Peter in Gandhara. An Early Christian Statuette in India," *Gazette des beaux arts*, XXIII (1943), pp. 65-70.

have been imported into India in the fifth century, bears a remarkable resemblance to the cult statue of St. Peter that is familiar to all visitors to St. Peter's in Rome and which is generally regarded as a work of the early Byzantine period. This is adequate demonstration that such statuettes were at times copied from major monuments. The same has been suggested for the little bronze figure of a seated saint<sup>11</sup> found at Trier, although the original from which it was copied is not now known.

The above examples support Professor Alföldi's contention that the Princeton bronze reproduces a larger statue which must have been set up soon after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in A.D. 312, when the role of the *cornuti* and the meaning of their "regimental badge" were still known to all. A stylistic comparison of the bronze weights with the carvings of the Arch of Constantine, set up in A.D. 315,<sup>12</sup> seems to confirm this conclusion. I wish to call attention especially to the relief representing the statues of Marcus Aurelius and Hadrian in the Roman Forum<sup>13</sup> (fig. 18) and to the now headless figure of Constantine<sup>14</sup> (fig. 19). Here we see the same squat posture, the same heavy folds of drapery incised with deep lines, even the same type of shoes as those we find in the bronze weights, although the latter must have lost through repeated re-casting certain traits of the model from which they were copied. In other words, the bronze statuettes appear to reflect the style of imperial statuary that was in official use in Rome *ca.* A.D. 310.

As I have said, the Moscow statuette has a globe surmounted by a cross and the Princeton one also shows traces of what was presumably a cross. The earliest instances of the *globus cruciger* in imperial coinage belong to the first half of the fifth century (coins of Theodosius II, Valentinian III, etc.).<sup>15</sup> It may be argued, therefore, that the statuettes without the cross, namely, those of Berlin, Kherson, and Washington, represent the earlier group, and that the cross was added at a later date, when the *globus cruciger* became a customary imperial attribute. On the other hand, it is possible, at least theoretically, that the cross may have been a feature of the prototype, and may have been subsequently omitted because it presented difficulty in casting. The Princeton statuette, which by virtue of its shield-emblem appears to be the most authentic, might be claimed to afford an argument in favor of this latter alternative. However, since there is no evidence that the *globus cruciger* was, in fact, used

<sup>11</sup> F. Behn, "Frühchristliche Bronzestatue aus Straßburg," *Germania* (1934), pp. 284-286, pl. 31.

<sup>12</sup> See H. P. L'Orange and A. Von Gerkan, *Der Spätantike Bildschmuck des Konstantinsbogens* (Berlin, 1939).

<sup>13</sup> For excellent illustrations, see A. Giuliano, *Arco di Costantino* (Milan, 1955), figs. 34, 40, 42 and 43.

<sup>14</sup> Giuliano, *op. cit.*, fig. 44.

<sup>15</sup> J. Tolstoy, *Monnaies byzantines*, I (1912), pl. 5, Theodosius II; H. Cohen, *Description historique des monnaies frappées sous l'Empire romain communément appelées médailles romaines*, VIII (Paris, 1892), Licinia Eudoxia, p. 218 and Eudoxia and Valentinian, pp. 218-219. For personifications with *globus cruciger*, see J. M. C. Toynbee, "Roma and Constantinopolis in Late-Antique Art from 312 to 365," *Journal of Roman Studies*, XXXVII (1947), pp. 135-144; p. 141 (reverse of coin of Nepotianus with personification of Roma holding a globe surmounted by a Christian symbol, nearly a century before such globes appear in the hands of emperors); *idem*, "Roma and Constantinopolis in Late-Antique Art from 365 to Justin II," *Studies presented to David M. Robinson*, II (St. Louis, 1953), pp. 261-277, esp. p. 269 and footnote 85.



at so early a period, one may well hesitate to accept it as a feature of the Constantinian prototype.

In searching for a monumental prototype, one is naturally led to think of Constantine's statue set up by vote of the Senate immediately after the battle of 312. This famous statue, however, is said by Eusebius to have held a spear or standard in the form of a cross,<sup>16</sup> and it is difficult to imagine that the prototype of our statuettes had such an attribute.

The provenance of our statuettes appears in most cases to be eastern. The same may also be said of bronze weights in the form of an emperor's or empress' bust, most of which have been found in the eastern regions of the Empire (Constantinople, Asia Minor, Syria, Cyprus, etc.). This observation does not militate against the Roman origin of the seated-emperor type, since the casts may have been in the first instance conveyed from Rome to Constantinople, and subsequently disseminated from the latter center to the eastern provinces of the Empire. The respect accorded to imperial portraits, whether they were made of precious or base material,<sup>17</sup> naturally meant that such weights were regarded as reliable standards bearing the stamp of government authority. The dissemination of these weights from the capital to the provinces may also have served to popularize the official art of the fourth century. The same purpose was, of course, achieved on a larger scale by coins and medallions, but one should not disregard the role played by small articles of mass-produced sculpture. A similar observation has already been made by Dr. C. C. Vermeule with regard to small terracotta reliefs modelled after the *zoccoli* of Constantine's Arch,<sup>18</sup> while Dr. Doro Levi has used a small bronze bust, probably of Fausta, in the Arles Museum to account for the "advanced" style of a fourth-century bust, from Chichester (now in the Princeton Art Museum), which is made of local chalk.<sup>19</sup> Like the cheap terracotta replicas and small imperial effigies, the weights, too, must have served as carriers of the artistic trends introduced in the fourth century.

As for a date when these bronze statuettes were made, there is very little basis for ascribing them to any particular period, since they are of rough workmanship and doubtless were mass produced for commercial purposes. Imperial busts intended to be used as weights appear to have been particularly popu-

<sup>16</sup> See H. Grégoire, "La statue de Constantin et le signe de la croix," *L'antiquité classique*, I (1932), pp. 135-143, esp. p. 138 ff.; J. Gagé, "La victoire impériale dans l'Empire chrétien," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuse*, XIII (1933), pp. 370-400, esp. p. 385 ff.; A. Alföldi, *The Conversion of Constantine and Pagan Rome* (Oxford, 1948), p. 42 ff. with further bibliography; C. Cecchelli, "La statua di Costantino col 'salutare segno' della croce," *Attes du VI<sup>e</sup> congrès international des études byzantines*, Paris, 1948, II (Paris, 1951), pp. 85-88. B. Stephanides, "Constantin le grand et le culte des empereurs," *Ἑπετηρίς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν*, 8 (1931), pp. 214-226, esp. pp. 217-218 (see criticism by F. Döger in *BZ* [1932], p. 441).

<sup>17</sup> See K. M. Setton, *Christian Attitude towards the Emperor in the Fourth Century* (New York, 1941), pp. 196 ff.

<sup>18</sup> C. C. Vermeule, "Roman Coins and Sculpture: Six Small Studies of the Reliefs from a Triumphal Arch," *Numismatic Circular* (July 1953), pp. 297-300; *idem*, "Herakles Crowning Himself: New Greek Statuary Types and their Place in Hellenistic and Roman Art," *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, LXXVII (1957), pp. 283-299, esp. p. 290, note 27.

<sup>19</sup> Doro Levi, "A Chalk Bust from Chichester," *Record of the Museum of Historic Art, Princeton University*, III, no. 2 (1944), pp. 9-19.

lar in the fifth century,<sup>20</sup> but continued in use as late as the reign of Phocas (602–610).<sup>21</sup> It was probably during this period, i.e. from the fifth to the early seventh century that the statuettes of Constantine were made.<sup>22</sup>

WASHINGTON, D.C., JANUARY 1959

MARVIN C. ROSS

<sup>20</sup> See R. Delbrueck, *Spätantike Kaiserporträts* (Berlin, 1933), pp. 229–231 and pl. 122 ff.

<sup>21</sup> See the weight in the British Museum illustrated by O. M. Dalton, *Catalogue of Early Christian Antiquities . . . of the British Museum* (London, 1901), p. 98, no. 485.

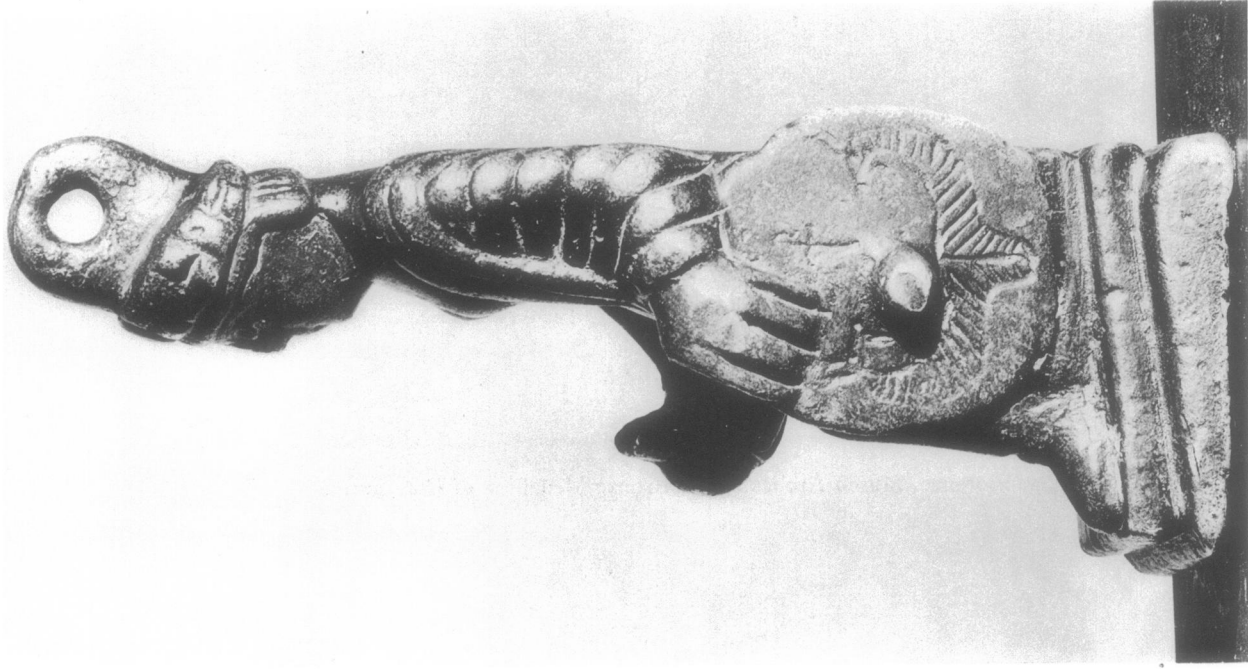
<sup>22</sup> This dating is based in part on the fact that no dated fourth-century monument or coin with an emperor holding the globe surmounted with a cross is known. However, the principle seems to have been accepted in the time of Constantine the Great, as seen on his silver medallion, struck in A.D. 317, showing the Emperor holding a scepter with a globe at the top surmounted by a cross (see A. Alföldi, "Das Kreuzzepter Konstantins des Grossen," *Schweizer Münzblätter*, IV [1953], pp. 81–86). The question has recently been raised by Phyllis Williams Lehman, "Theodosius or Justinian? A Renaissance Drawing of a Byzantine Rider," *The Art Bulletin*, XLI (1959), pp. 38–57, esp. p. 44.

Two other small bronze statuettes of Constantine the Great are known in the literature on the subject. One, an equestrian statuette, was found at Altinum in Italy in the nineteenth century, and was acquired by the Museum in Vienna. Dr. Noll has recently made a study of it and believes it to have been made in the "Solar Period" of the Emperor, i.e. *circa* A.D. 310–325 (R. Noll, "Der Reiter von Altinum," *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes*, XLIII [1956–1958], pp. 113–119). The tube-like rendering of the drapery and the general roughness of the workmanship recall the bronze weights. Another bronze statuette, a standing figure of the Emperor, found in Jutland in 1730 and now in the Copenhagen Museum, was identified as Constantine the Great by M. B. Mackprang ("Eine in Jutland vor 200 Jahren gefundene Kaiserstatuette," *Acta Archaeologia*, IX [1938], pp. 135–151), who thought it possibly a replica of the famous statue on the porphyry column in Constantinople.

These bronze statuettes doubtless reflect the great esteem in which the Emperor was held during his lifetime and long after his death, and, considering his popularity, it was natural for replicas of his likeness to have had broad public appeal.



1. Front view



2. Left side view

Princeton University, Art Museum. Bronze Statuette of an Emperor



Obverse

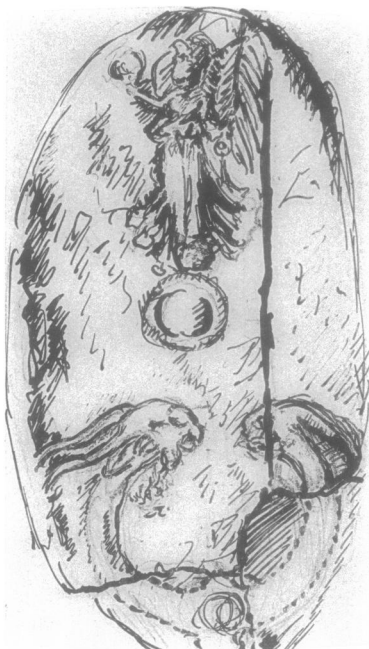


Reverse

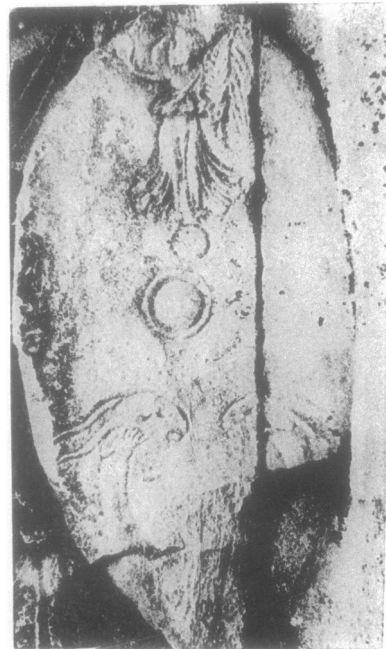
3. Florence, Museo Archeologico. Bronze Medallion of Constantine I



4. Rome, Arch of Constantine. Detail of Warrior's Head

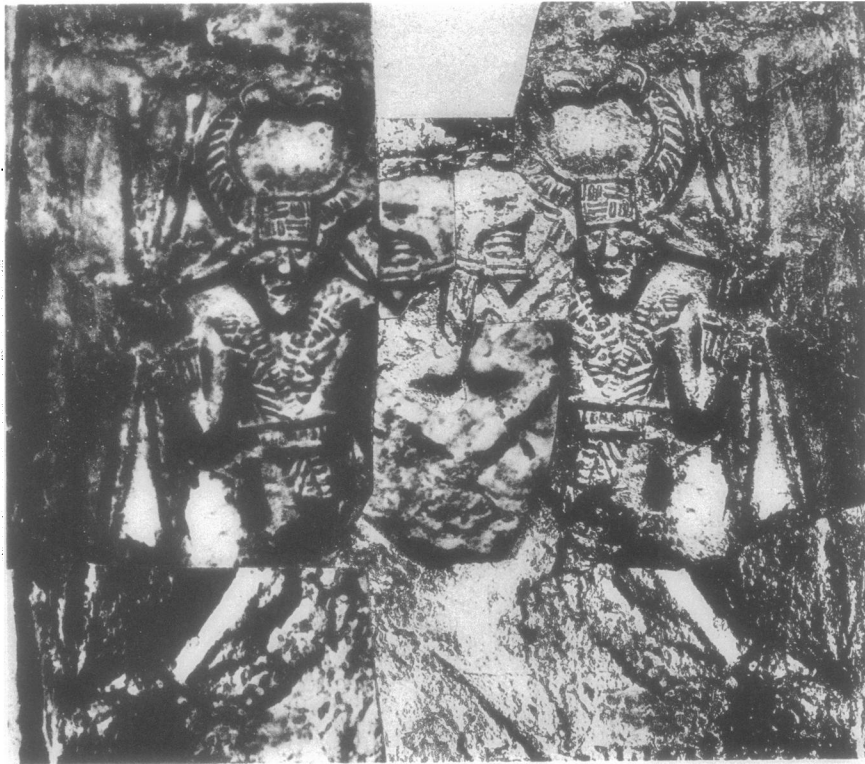


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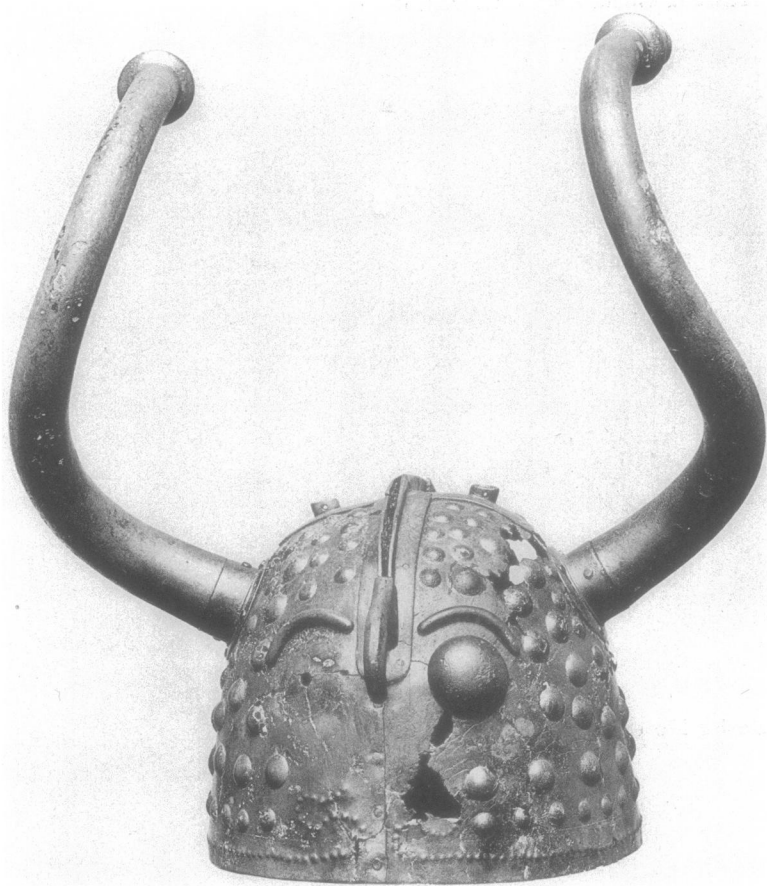


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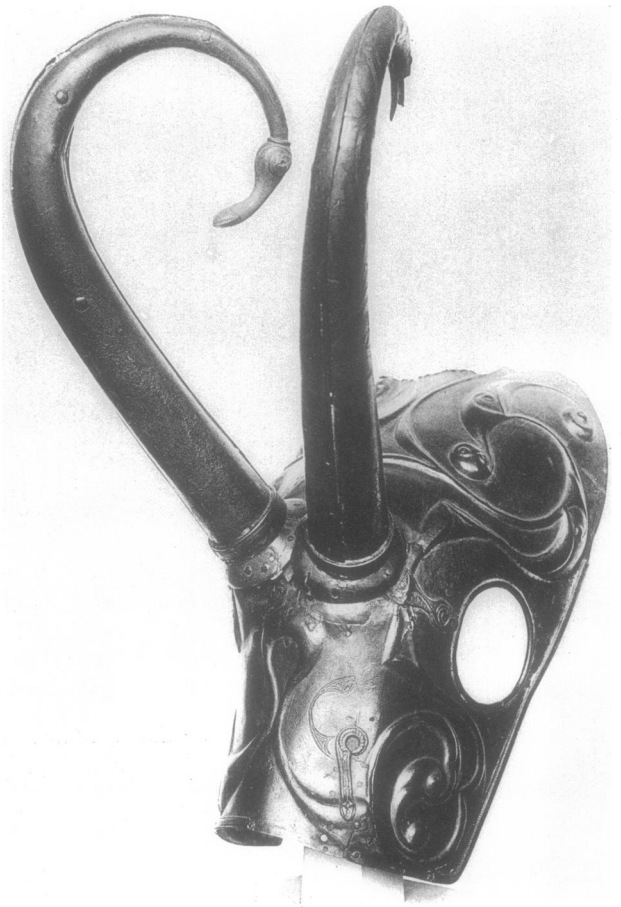
Rome, Arch of Constantine. Detail of Relief on Pedestal



7. London, British Museum. Royal Helmet from Sutton Hoo, detail



8. Copenhagen, National Museum. Scandinavian Helmet



9. Edinburgh, National Museum of Antiquities. Torrs Chamfrein





10. Copenhagen, National Museum. Gundestrup Cauldron, detail



11.



12.

Stockholm, Statens Historiska Museen. Torslunda Plaque



13

13a.

Berlin, Staatliche Museen. Scale, with bronze Statuette of Constantine



14. Moscow, State Historical Museum. Bronze Weight



15. Kherson, Museum. Bronze Weight

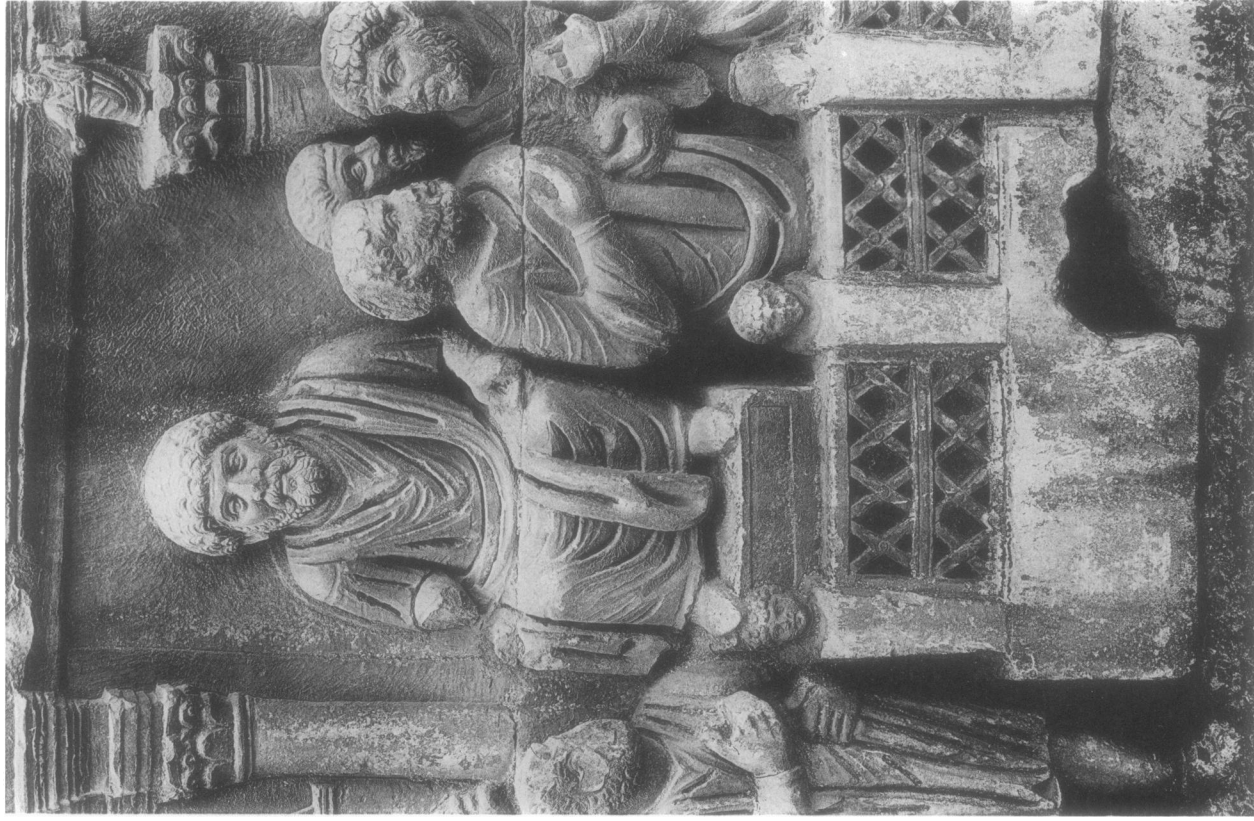




16. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks Collection. Bronze Weight



17. Statuette of St. Peter. Location unknown



18.

Rome, Arch of Constantine. Detail



19.